



# National Weather Service

## Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena



December 1998

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Location	Date	Time Local/ Standard	Path Length (Miles)	Path Width (Yards)	Number of Persons		Estimated Damage		Character of Storm
					Killed	Injured	Property	Crops	
<u><b>MICHIGAN, East</b></u>									
Genesee County Davison	06	2300EST			0	0			Thunderstorm Wind (G52)
Lapeer County Lapeer	06	2305EST			0	0	2K		Thunderstorm Wind (G50)
Sanilac County Marlette	06	2306EST			0	0	40K		Thunderstorm Wind (G60)
Washtenaw County Manchester	06	2308EST			0	0	10K		Thunderstorm Wind (G52)
Lenawee County Devils Lake	06	2310EST			0	0	20K		Thunderstorm Wind (G52)
Livingston County 5 N Hartland	06	2310EST			0	0	5K		Thunderstorm Wind (G52)
Sanilac County 10 W Lexington to Lexington	06	2320EST 2330EST			0	0	3K		Thunderstorm Wind (G50)
Washtenaw County Ann Arbor to Ypsilanti	06	2323EST 2325EST			0	0	175K		Thunderstorm Wind (G56)
Wayne County 2 N Plymouth to Redford	06	2333EST 2344EST			0	0	50K		Thunderstorm Wind (G61)
Oakland County 4 E White Lake to Pontiac	06	2335EST 2338EST			0	0	6K		Thunderstorm Wind (G55)
Oakland County 3 N Farmington to Birmingham	06	2336EST 2342EST			0	2	60K		Thunderstorm Wind (G61)
Wayne County Willow Run Arpt to Romulus	06	2340EST 2345EST			0	0	365K		Thunderstorm Wind (G56)
Oakland County Rochester Hills to Troy	06	2350EST 2351EST			0	0	10K		Thunderstorm Wind (G65)
Monroe County Monroe	06	2351EST			0	0	10K		Thunderstorm Wind (G50)
Wayne County Allen Park to Trenton	06	2353EST			0	0	70K		Thunderstorm Wind (G55)
Macomb County Utica to 2 E Mt Clemens	06 07	2355EST 0005EST			0	0	50K		Thunderstorm Wind (G55)
Macomb County Romeo	07	0000EST			0	0	2K		Thunderstorm Wind (G52)
St. Clair County Port Huron	07	0000EST 0015EST			0	0	10K		Thunderstorm Wind (G52)

The first several days of December were unseasonably warm in southeast Michigan. The warm weather culminated on the 6th, when Detroit reached a high of 69 degrees - the warmest reading ever in Detroit in December. However, a powerful cold front swung through the state late in the evening on the 6th. A thin line of showers and thunderstorms accompanied the front, moving east at about 50 mph. Many of the storms along the line produced wind damage. The result was a December severe weather episode - a rather uncommon event for Michigan. Most of the wind damage occurred immediately behind the line of convection, and the majority of the damage involved the downing of trees, large limbs, and power lines

The majority of the severe weather occurred near or south of Interstate 69. The most notable exception to this was a swath of wind



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### MICHIGAN, East

damage across southern Sanilac County, from Marlette to Lexington. Barns and silos were destroyed near Marlette, and a home was deroofed.

A more spotty damage path roughly followed I-69 from Davison to Port Huron. A National Weather Service employee estimated 60 mph wind in Davison. Limbs and power lines were downed further east, in Lapeer and Port Huron. Damage was also spotty across Livingston, Oakland, and Macomb Counties. In Oakland County, the National Weather Service office in White Lake measured a 63 mph gust. In Farmington, a home was heavily damaged when it was struck by a large evergreen. A tree fell onto a vehicle on Middlebelt Road in West Bloomfield Township, and the two occupants suffered minor injuries. In Birmingham, the walls of a construction project were blown over, while in Troy, a billboard was shredded by severe winds. The city of Utica in Macomb County was especially hard hit, with many trees and power lines downed.

Damage was a little heavier across Washtenaw and Wayne Counties. A barn was destroyed near Manchester. A 64 mph gust was measured at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, while Detroit Metropolitan Airport had a 60 mph gust. In between those two sites, heavy damage occurred in Ypsilanti and at nearby Willow Run Airport. Three apartments suffered extensive roof damage near Ypsilanti, and a home was damaged by a falling tree. At Willow Run Airport, many planes were tossed about, resulting in the destruction of 4 planes, and damage to another half-dozen or so. In Livonia, a metal shed was thrown into a yard two homes down from where it started. In addition, the walls of a drug store under construction were toppled. Nativity scenes were thrown about in Plymouth and Romulus. An historic elm tree lost large limbs in Lincoln Park, a nearby school suffered substantial roof damage, and a dry cleaners under construction was damaged. In Trenton, a trampoline became airborne and flew into nearby tree limbs and power lines, downing them.

Damage was isolated in the southernmost tier of counties. A tree fell on a home in Devils Lake, and an uprooted tree came crashing down onto a garage in Monroe.

MIZ054>055-063

#### **Tuscola - Sanilac - St. Clair**

<b>17</b>	<b>2200EST</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Heavy Snow</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>0730EST</b>			

A cold air mass covered the Great Lakes, while a trough of low pressure developed over the relatively warm water of Lake Huron. A lake effect snow band formed over central Lake Huron on the 17th, and as the wind shifted to the northeast with the passing trough, the snow band came onshore in the Thumb area. Seven inches of snow fell in Lexington (Sanilac County), while Croswell (Sanilac) received six inches. Six inches of snow also fell in northeast St Clair County, north of Port Huron. A similar lake effect snow band over Saginaw Bay also came onshore, producing six inches of snow in Akron (Tuscola). Snowfall rates with these bands were around an inch an hour.

MIZ053

#### **Saginaw**

<b>30</b>	<b>1200EST</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500K</b>	<b>Cold</b>
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High temperatures in the teens and lows in single digits were too much for some pipes to handle. A pipe (part of a fire suppression sprinkler system) froze and burst in Brown Hall at Saginaw Valley State University. By the time it was discovered New Years Eve, water was 3 to 4 inches deep in numerous faculty and secretarial offices. Computer equipment, furniture, and files were damaged. The time of the pipe burst is unknown.